

On 29 November 1978, a group of heavily armed men, who declared themselves verbally to be from the Fuerza del Comando Conjunto, carried out an operativo in Villa del Parque, Buenos Aires.

They came to the area with a prepared list of young people whom they wanted to question in connexion with subversion. All of the listed youngsters had in common the fact that they were members, some three years back, of the Casa de la Juventud run at the time by Rev. Rivas, a Redemptorist priest who has since left the priesthood; a second common characteristic is that they belonged to (but now no longer belong to) a catholic movement called "Cristianos para la liberación". (This movement has for long been considered by the military authorities as highly subversive). A military officer on the occasion of the operativo in question said in fact that they were seeking out a terrorist cell centred on this group who some years ago belonged to the Cristianos para la liberación but, my informant insisted, no longer today, belong to it.

The Military involved in this procedure evidently had the addresses of the homes of these young peoples' parents, as they went first to them demanding with threats, verbal abuse and physical mal-treatment (punches and kicks) to know where a son or a daughter now lived. With these <sup>new</sup> addresses they then proceeded to arrest between 60-70 youths (boys and girls), who were invariably manhandled and hooded before being taken away. In some cases if the young couple had a baby this was brought to the house of the parents. Many of the apartments were ransacked and robbed of their contents, including furniture. Often what was not stolen was broken.

Officially the military authorities denied afterwards that they were responsible for the operativo in question, so that all these young people were in the category of disappeared persons. However, in the course of the procedure an officer attached a notice to one door officially announcing (with seal and signature) the operativo of the Fuerzas Conjuntas. This was photographed and enlarged and presented to the authorities who then admitted responsibility for what had happened.

Thereafter, the detained youngsters were released little by little (apparently being taken by car or other vehicle to some place in the city by night and being left there to find their way home); these releases commenced on 21 December, continuing into January so that presently only two remain still in detention: - Fontanella a married youth and Vacaro, a young married girl who is expecting a baby soon.

at the time by Rev. Rivas, a Registered Professional Engineer (END-Certified)

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